

DRAFT

Economic Development

Introduction	2
Part 1 Long-Term Socioeconomic Trends	4
Part 2 Developing Desired Outcomes	18
Part 3 Goals, Objectives and Actions	21



INTRODUCTION: **FUTUREBR Economic Development**

The health, quality of life and sustainability of a city is grounded in its ability to retain and create jobs that pay a family wage and an environment where businesses can thrive. A sound economic development plan and accompanying strategy are central to realizing East Baton Rouge's full potential. Economic development must be thoroughly integrated with the land use, transportation, housing, and other key elements of the plan. A strong, diverse economy will provide many of the resources necessary to accomplish plan goals. However, economic prosperity requires a strategic approach where new business ventures emerge and thrive.

~~In this element we provide an analysis of Baton Rouge's economy, including long-term socioeconomic trends, an assessment of key industry clusters and an action plan that will guide Baton Rouge's economic development efforts for future decades. Also included is a set of goals, setting the bar for the City-Parish's economic development efforts.~~

Core Values and Aspirations of the Vision

A diverse group of residents and stakeholders representing all parts of East Baton Rouge Parish provided input through workshops, open houses, interviews, focus groups and survey discussions. Respondents consistently cited the following core values and aspirations they believed should be the foundation for building a vision for East Baton Rouge Parish.

Core values that relate to economic development:

Prosperity: All residents have access to a thriving economy with job opportunities in growing diverse businesses.

Equity: All residents have access to a good education, public services, housing and job opportunities.

Diversity: The City is known for embracing diversity and acceptance of other cultures, ethnicities and groups.

Strong Neighborhoods and Communities: Neighborhoods in all areas of the City are desirable places to live and have a range of housing types and nearby amenities to serve the City-Parish's residents.

Sustainability: The future reflects the creativity and resiliency of East Baton Rouge's young residents and offers a sustainable place for youth to thrive – with a focus on building a future based on fiscal, physical, environmental, economic and equitable sustainability.



PART 1: Long-Term Socioeconomic Trends

East Baton Rouge Parish is the largest employment center in the nine-parish metropolitan statistical area (MSA). The City-Parish holds approximately 63 percent of the region's jobs, bringing employees from across the region into the Parish every day to work, shop, dine, and access services. ~~Despite the global economic downturn,~~ **In recent years,** the unemployment rate in Baton Rouge has remained lower than national and state averages. Some of the largest employers in the City-Parish are also those that have historically been among the most stable: government, education, the petrochemical industry, and the medical industry. In addition, the City-Parish government, its contracted economic development agency (Baton Rouge Area Chamber), and the wider business community have focused efforts in recent years on business recruitment and retention.

Baton Rouge offers a considerable number of economic strengths and assets. It's a major center for higher education. Louisiana State University, Southern University, Baton Rouge Community College, and multiple trade schools are all located in the City-Parish, graduating ~~5,000 to 7,000~~ **approximately 8,000** students every year and providing a wider platform for research, innovation, and workforce development.¹

¹ Between 2005 and 2010 LSU enrolled an average of 28,200 students and graduated an average of 5,900 students per year (bachelor's and master's). Southern University enrolls approximately 9,000 full and part-time students per year. BRCC enrolls approximately 7,500-8,000 students.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Part 1: Socioeconomic Trends



Like many areas in the nation, East Baton Rouge Parish's economic growth is challenged by brownfields and neglected urban properties. To help address these conditions the City-Parish has established a Brownfields Program and a Redevelopment Authority. Since it was established in 2000, the East Baton Rouge Parish's Brownfields Program has leveraged \$1,800,000 in federal grants into more than \$28 million to help fund environmental assessments and remediation on more than 1,980 properties.

In addition, the East Baton Rouge Redevelopment Authority was established in 2007 to assist in redeveloping disinvested areas within the City-Parish, including residential, commercial and industrial properties.

The East Baton Rouge Parish Public School System (K-12), the largest district in the state with 86 99 schools, has the national recognition for improvements it has achieved in recent years. The school system has received support of City-Parish residents, who recently approved a 10-year extension of the in the form of a one-cent sales tax dedicated to public education.

The City-Parish is well-located along key transportation routes (roads, water, rail), which include the I-10/I-12 corridor, railroad/airport infrastructure, and the Port of Greater Baton Rouge. These provide Baton Rouge businesses with the ability to transport people and products efficiently.

However, there are a number of challenges to the City-Parish's economic future. These include broader quality-of-life factors, such as concerns about public safety, the quality of the public K-12 school system, low air and water quality, a continuing population shift to the outlying parts of the Parish and other parishes, and acute economic and racial disparity within the City-Parish. These factors have broader effects, both direct and indirect, on the economy of the City-Parish. For instance, local university graduates continue to seek employment opportunities and a better quality of life in other southern cities, such as Houston, Charlotte and Atlanta.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Part 1: Socioeconomic Trends

Employers report difficulty in recruiting and retaining a qualified workforce, which affects the City-Parish's ability to keep existing businesses and recruit new employers. In recent years, ~~traffic congestion~~ **quality of place** has moved toward the top of the list of challenges facing businesses and employees in the City-Parish.

The City-Parish now needs to make pivotal choices about its economic future. Identifying and implementing effective economic development strategies has become a widespread pursuit among communities in the U.S. Some have elected to take a focused approach to economic wellbeing, while others have opted for a more comprehensive engagement. The City-Parish's interests are best served through the latter.

Economic development is most commonly defined as making the economy grow, and is thus typically measured as increases in gross domestic product (the dollar value of what the economy produces) or in number of employees (jobs). Since a strong economy and high employment means people can

buy goods and services, growth in household and per capita income has become another economic development indicator. But in the last 20 years, a broader view of economic development has emerged and gained support in communities throughout the U.S.

In this broader-view definition, job and business development are still the primary objective of local government economic development efforts. But this broader definition also means a strong economy includes paying attention to social and environmental issues – such as ~~land use,~~ environmental quality, and social justice.

More attractive neighborhoods, quality schools, and less crime all make an area more attractive to business development. The recommendations outlined in this chapter focus on the primary concerns of economic development (i.e., economic activity and jobs), but also address other important quality-of-life **place** issues that ultimately affect the economic well-being of the City-Parish.

"Economic development is the process of improving a community's wellbeing through job creation, business growth, and income growth (factors that are the typical and reasonable focus of economic development policy), as well as through improvements to the wider social and natural environment that strengthen the economy." Moore, Meck, and Ebenhoh. 2006. Economic Development Toolbox: Strategies and Methods. PAS Report American Planning Association Press. Chicago.

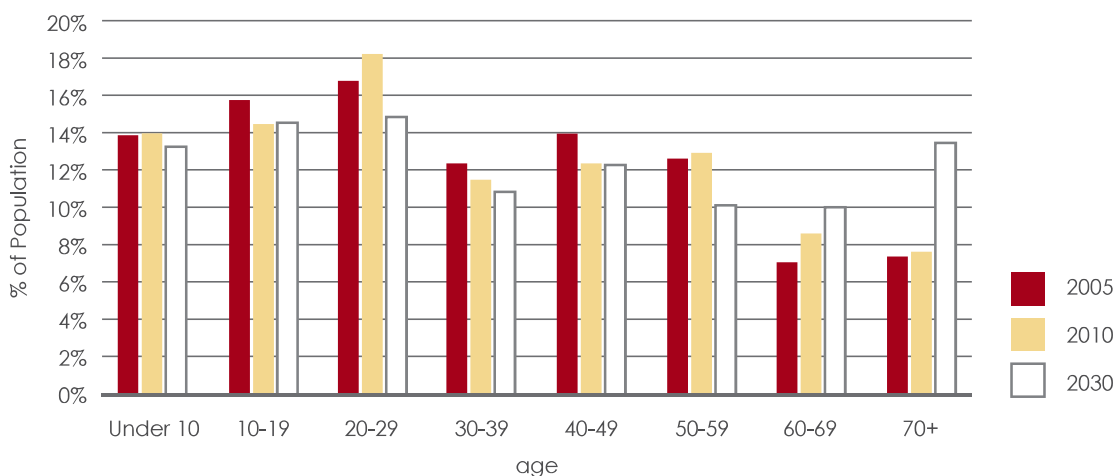
Existing and Future Conditions

East Baton Rouge Parish is the most populous parish in Louisiana. In the last two decades, East Baton Rouge Parish has experienced an 18 percent increase in its population, from 380,699 in 1990 to **447,037 in 2016 (ACS estimate)** ~~440,171 in 2010~~. That is an average increase of 0.73 percent per year, which is faster than the state of Louisiana (0.36% ~~percent~~), but slower than the region, which grew at 1.26% ~~percent~~ per year. During this same time period, the share of the region's population living in East Baton Rouge Parish declined.

Population Demographics

The Parish is expected to experience shifts in the percentage of the population in each age group over the next 20 years. According to state forecasts prepared in 2005, the percentage of the Parish's population over the age of 60 is expected to grow from 16% ~~percent~~ in 2005, to **25% percent** in 2030.² These shifts reflect national trends as one of the nation's largest demographic groups (~~to~~ **Baby Boomers** born between 1946 and 1963~~5~~) continues to age and retire in greater numbers. Figure 1 illustrates the Parish's age profile in 2005, 2010, and projected for 2030.

Figure 1: Percent of Population by Age, East Baton Rouge Parish, 2005 and Projected 2010 and 2030



Source: State of Louisiana Population Projections. http://www.louisiana.gov/Explore/Population_Projections/

²—The American Community Survey estimates the percentage of Baton Rouge residents above the age of 60 to be 15% in 2009, which is slightly below the State's projection for 2010.

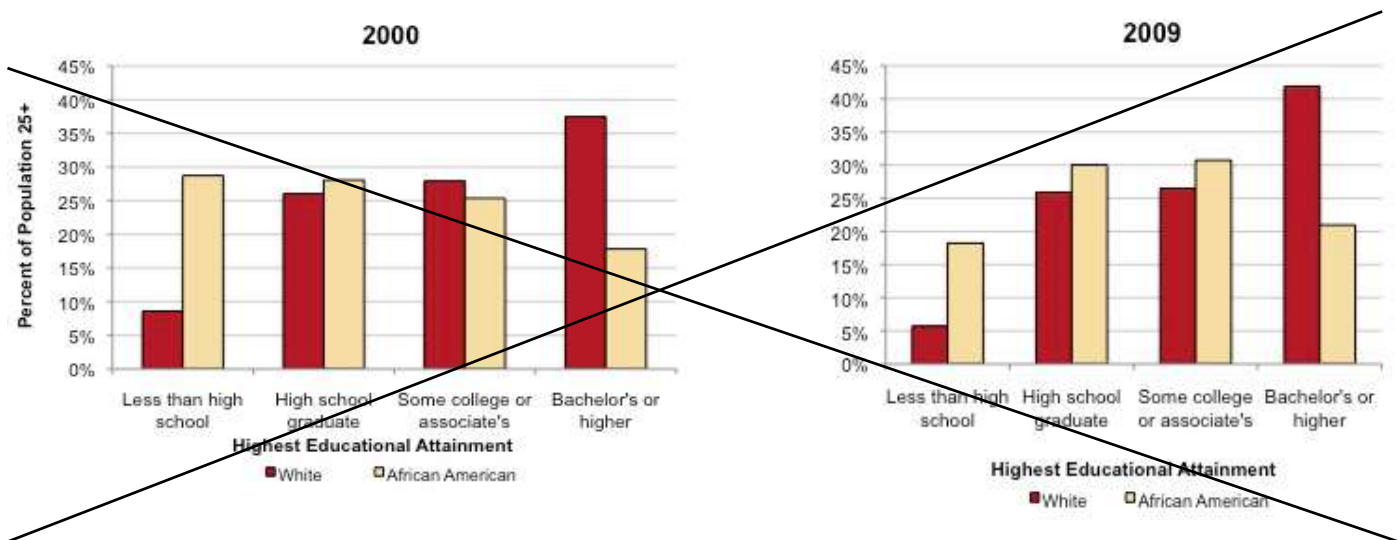
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Part 1: Socioeconomic Trends

Educational Attainment

Educational levels have increased for all residents of the Parish during the last decade, although white residents continue to reach higher levels than African Americans. Figure 2 and 3 shows the highest level of educational attainment for white and African American residents above the age of 25 in East Baton Rouge Parish in 2000 and 2015 2009. While education improved for both races between the two years, a gap remains between white and African American residents in the Parish. In 2015 2009, 44% 42 percent of white residents had a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to just 20% 21 percent of African American residents. Five Six percent of white residents in 2015 2009 did not have a high school diploma, compared to 16% 18 percent of African American residents. These data suggest, however, that the percentage of African American residents with college education increased significantly between 2000 and 2009.

Figure 2: Educational Attainment by Race, East Baton Rouge Parish, 2000 and 2015 2009

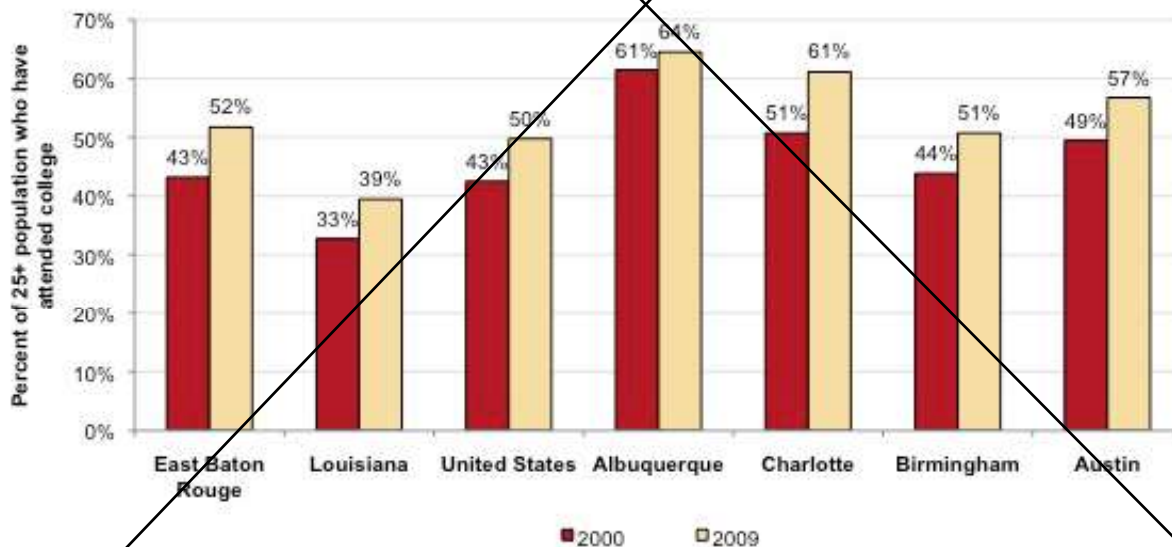


Source: U.S. Census 2000, American Community Survey 2015 2009

Figure 3 shows educational attainment for African American residents only in East Baton Rouge Parish between 2000 and 2009 compared to the U.S. and Louisiana, as well as other southern cities. The proportion of African American residents with some form of higher education has increased in East Baton Rouge Parish, from 43 percent in 2000 to 52 percent in 2009.

Figure 4 shows educational attainment for African American residents in East Baton Rouge Parish in 2015 compared to the nation, the state of Louisiana and other parishes in Louisiana. The proportion of African American residents with a bachelor's degree or higher is greater in East Baton Rouge Parish than any of the other regions.

Figure 3: Comparison of Educational Attainment for African American Residents



Source: U.S. Census 2000, American Community Survey 2009

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Part 1: Socioeconomic Trends

Income

Table 1 Figure 4 shows per capita income in East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana, and the U.S. in 1990, 2000, and 2015. Parishwide per capita income in 2010³ was \$40,132, significantly higher than the U.S. rate (\$27,334) slightly less than the U.S. rate (\$26,409). However, incomes in the Parish grew by 55% 30 percent between 1990 and 2010³, slower faster than Louisiana (66% 15 percent) and but faster than the U.S. (25% 21 percent) during the same time period.

Figure 6 compares the percentage of population in poverty by race. In 2015, a higher percentage of African Americans (23%) live in poverty compared to white (5%) residents in East Baton Rouge Parish. African American children (33%) are more than four times more likely to live in poverty compared to white children (8%).

Per capita income grew in real terms for both white and African American populations in East Baton Rouge Parish between 1990 and 2009. In 1990, African American per capita income was about 41 percent of white income and increased to 49 percent by 2009 — in other words, per capita income of white residents remained almost twice that of African Americans in 2009. Nationwide, per capita income for African Americans was 61 percent of whites. Over the 19-year period, per capita income in East Baton Rouge Parish increased by \$6,000 for the total population — about \$9,000 for the white population, and about \$6,400 for African American residents. In percentage terms, per capita income grew faster for African American residents, though the absolute dollar gap increased from about \$15,000 to about \$17,500.³

³ Income is one factor that contributes to financial security. Asset ownership is another factor. Owning assets provides greater economic stability and mobility. A household is generally considered “asset poor” if it has insufficient net worth to support itself at the federal poverty level for three months in the absence of income. According to the Corporation for Enterprise Development Assets and Opportunities Scorecard, in 2006, approximately 30% of Louisiana’s households were considered extremely asset poor (zero net worth), which is only somewhat higher than the national average of 27%. However, 47% of African American households in Louisiana were asset poor, while only

Figure 4: Comparison of per Capita Income in 2009 Dollars

	Total Population	White	African American
East Baton Rouge Parish			
1990	\$19,878	\$25,210	\$10,381
2000	\$24,084	\$31,570	\$13,967
2009	\$25,886	\$34,160	\$16,746
change 1990-2009	\$6,008	\$8,950	\$6,365
% change 1990-2009	30%	36%	61%
Louisiana			
1990	\$16,105	\$19,620	\$8,612
2000	\$20,582	\$24,934	\$12,372
2009	\$22,969	\$27,680	\$14,313
change 1990-2009	\$2,387	\$2,746	\$1,941
% change 1990-2009	15%	14%	23%
U.S.			
1990	\$21,837	\$23,756	\$13,416
2000	\$26,271	\$29,108	\$17,570
2009	\$26,409	\$28,960	\$17,700
change 1990-2009	\$4,572	\$5,204	\$4,284
% change 1990-2009	21%	22%	32%

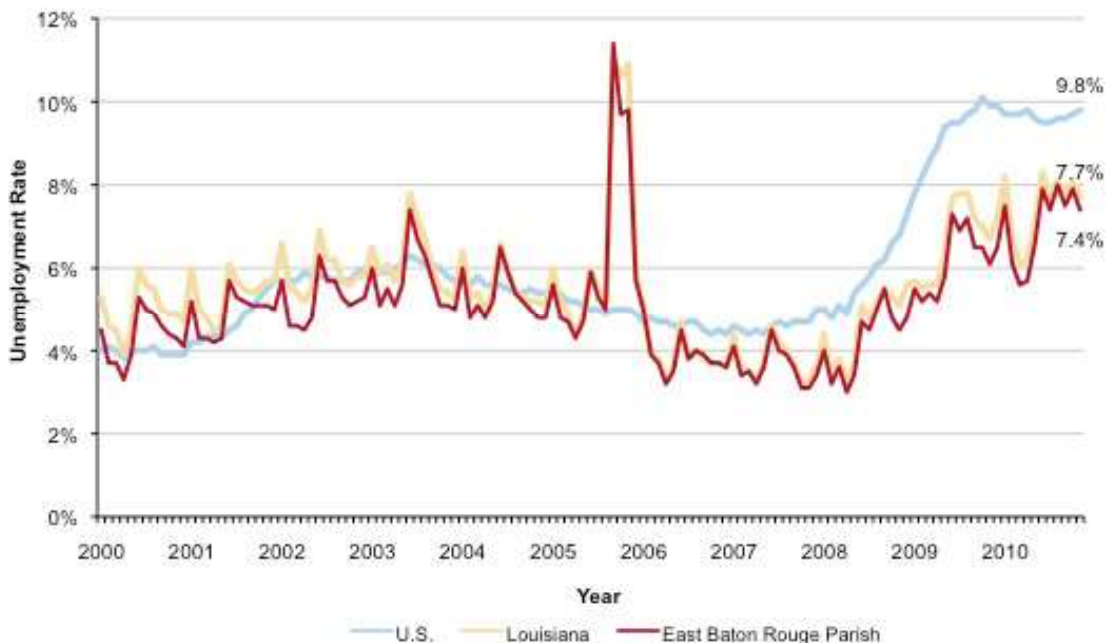
Source: U.S. Census 1990, 2000, American Community Survey 2009. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Table 2.3.4
Note: Figures in 2009 constant dollars, inflated by BEA's PCE Index

Income is one factor that contributes to financial security. Asset ownership is another factor. Owning assets provides greater economic stability and mobility. A household is generally considered “asset poor” if it has insufficient net worth to support itself at the federal poverty level for three months in the absence of income. According to the Prosperity Now Scorecard, in 2017, approximately 30% of East Baton Rouge Parish’s households were considered extremely asset poor (zero net worth), which is higher than the national average of 26%.

Unemployment

East Baton Rouge Parish’s unemployment rate follows national trends (with the exception of a spike in 2005 related to the effects of Hurricane Katrina) but has been **higher** consistently ~~lower~~ than the national rate since ~~2014~~ 2006. Figure 7.5 shows the unemployment rate in the United States, Louisiana, and East Baton Rouge Parish ~~from 2007 through 2017~~ January 2000 through December 2010. ~~At the end of the period~~ In April 2017, the Parish’s unemployment rate was ~~4.7%~~ 7.4 percent compared to ~~5.8%~~ 7.7 percent in the state and ~~4.4%~~ 9.8 percent in the U.S. Since the beginning of the current recession (around mid-2008), the unemployment rate in the United States has risen much faster than the rates in the Parish and state.

Figure 5: Unemployment rate, United States, Louisiana, and East Baton Rouge Parish, 2000–2010



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Note: Unemployment figures not seasonally adjusted

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Part 1: Socioeconomic Trends

According to the 2009 American Community Survey, the unemployment rate in East Baton Rouge Parish for the white population was 3 percent, compared to 13 percent for the African American population.⁴

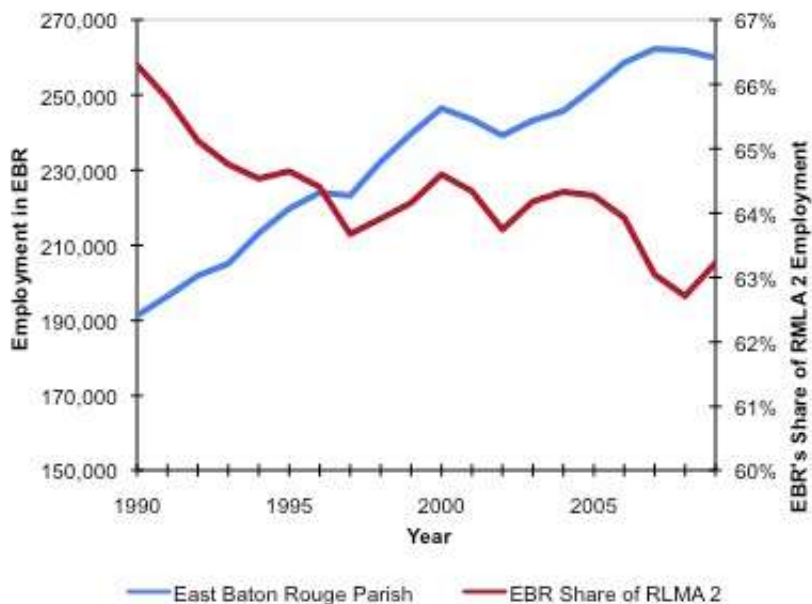
Employment

Figure 7 shows total employment in East Baton Rouge Parish. In 2015, the Parish had 269,122 of the region's 437,505 jobs, making up 62% of metropolitan region's total employment. This is a decrease from 2006, meaning that outlying areas saw greater employment growth than East Baton Rouge Parish (Figure 8).

Figure 6 shows total employment in East Baton Rouge Parish as well as the Parish's share of region-wide employment from 1990 to 2009. In 2009, the Parish had 259,872 of the region's 411,011 jobs, making up 63% of metropolitan region's total employment, a 3% decrease from 1990. This means that outlying areas saw greater employment growth than East Baton Rouge Parish. Although still at 63 percent, data shows a recent upward trend in the share of employment.

4 2009 American Community Survey Table C23002B

Figure 6: Total Employment in East Baton Rouge Parish and the Parish's Share of the Regional Labor Market, 1990-2009



Source: Louisiana Workforce Commission. http://www.laworks.net/Downloads/Downloads_LMI.asp#EmployWageAnnual

Note: RLMA 2 refers to the Baton Rouge Regional Labor Market Area, as defined by the Louisiana Workforce Commission, which includes the following parishes: Ascension, East Baton Rouge, East Feliciana, Iberville, Livingston, Pointe Coupee, St. Helena, Tangipahoa, Washington, West Baton Rouge, and West Feliciana.

Figure 7 shows historical employment by industry sector in East Baton Rouge Parish in 2001 and 2009. The largest industries in the Parish in 2009 were health care and social assistance (37,362 jobs), construction (30,863), retail trade (27,566), and educational services (25,884). Employment in the Parish increased by approximately 16,000 jobs between 2001 and 2009, or 0.8 percent annually. Sectors with the highest job increases since 2001 were administrative services, health care and social assistance (10,885 jobs), construction (4,916), and transportation and warehousing educational services (3,781), and professional and technical services (3,733). Industries with the largest declines in employment since 2001 were utilities, manufacturing (lost 2,214 jobs), wholesale trade (lost 1,649), and mining transportation and warehousing (lost 1,334).

Figure 7: Employment by Industry Sector, East Baton Rouge Parish, 2001 and 2009

Industry Sector	EBR Employment as percent of region		Change 2001-2009
	2001	2009	
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	16%	11%	-5%
Mining	56%	45%	-10%
Utilities	35%	33%	-2%
Construction	66%	69%	2%
Manufacturing	42%	42%	0%
Wholesale trade	68%	64%	-3%
Retail trade	61%	57%	-3%
Transportation and warehousing	57%	48%	-9%
Information	74%	78%	3%
Finance and insurance	79%	73%	-6%
Real estate and rental and leasing	74%	71%	-4%
Professional and technical services	84%	84%	1%
Management of companies and enterprises	90%	86%	-4%
Administrative and waste services	79%	69%	-10%
Educational services	60%	60%	0%
Health care and social assistance	63%	64%	1%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	75%	68%	-7%
Accommodation and food services	67%	63%	-4%
Other services, except public administration	70%	66%	-4%
Public administration	67%	68%	1%
Total	64%	63%	-1%
Total Parish Employment	243,477	259,872	16,395

Source: Louisiana Workforce Commission.
http://www.laworks.net/Downloads/Downloads_LMI.asp#EmployWageAnnual

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Part 1: Socioeconomic Trends

The Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) develops statewide employment projections that consider historical trends as well as other indicators, such as plant closures, rig counts, and employment rates. Table 2 ~~Figure 8~~ shows the projected employment growth for East Baton Rouge Parish's regional labor market area between 2015-2024 ~~2008 and 2018~~. LWC projects that the regional labor market will add about 38,787 ~~48,000~~ jobs to the economy between 2015-2024 ~~2008 and 2018~~, or about 8 ~~11~~ percent growth.

The highest rates of growth are projected in mining (28%); professional, scientific and technical services (17%); health care and social assistance (17%); and accommodation and food services (17%), for a total of 20,400 jobs across those four industries.

~~The highest rates of growth are projected in mining (27 percent), accommodation and food services (21 percent), health care and social assistance (21 percent), administrative and waste services (20 percent), and mining (18 percent), for a total of 24,881 jobs across~~

Figure 8: Projected Employment by Industry Sector, Baton Rouge Labor Market Area (RMLA 2), 2008-2018

Industry	2008	2018	Change 2008-2018	
			Number	%
Agriculture, Fishing, Forestry, and Hunting	2,078	1,765	-313	-15%
Mining	1,689	1,989	300	18%
Utilities	2,793	2,800	7	0%
Construction	42,701	42,927	226	1%
Manufacturing	29,943	31,592	1,649	6%
Wholesale Trade	15,214	15,660	446	3%
Retail Trade	48,763	53,244	4,481	9%
Transportation and Warehousing	14,703	16,040	1,337	9%
Information	6,379	6,614	235	4%
Finance and Insurance	14,119	16,137	2,018	14%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	5,751	6,507	756	13%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	21,665	23,354	1,689	8%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	5,198	4,857	-341	-7%
Administrative and Waste Services	22,633	27,206	4,573	20%
Educational Services	42,981	47,482	4,501	10%
Health Care and Social Assistance	53,129	64,479	11,350	21%
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	5,147	5,695	548	11%
Accommodation and Food Services	32,643	41,301	8,658	27%
Other Services, Except Public Administration	11,750	13,930	2,180	19%
Non-covered Workers	33,676	34,999	1,323	4%
Government	40,808	43,925	3,117	8%
TOTAL, All Industries	453,763	502,503	48,740	11%

Source: Louisiana Workforce Commission

Note: RMLA2 is the Baton Rouge Regional Labor Market Area, which includes the following parishes: Ascension, East Baton Rouge, East Feliciana, Iberville, Livingston, Pointe Coupee, St. Helena, Tangipahoa, Washington, West Baton Rouge, and West Feliciana.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Part 1: Socioeconomic Trends

those four industries. Other industry sectors projected to add significant numbers of jobs include: education services (4,500), retail trade (4,481), and government (3,117).

LWC translates industry projections expressed according to the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) into occupational projections (Occupational Employment Statistics) at the regional level. Figure 9 shows the state's projected employment by occupational category for 2008 through 2018.

Figure 9: Projected Employment by Occupational Category, Baton Rouge Labor Market Area, 2008-2018

Occupation	2008	2018	Change 2008-2018	
			Number	%
Personal and Home Care Aides	4,517	6,577	2,060	46%
Pharmacy Technicians	970	1,390	420	43%
Network Systems and Data Communications Analysts	347	497	150	43%
Home Health Aides	1,844	2,594	750	41%
Manicurists and Pedicurists	329	459	130	39%
Medical Assistants	1,047	1,427	380	36%
Computer Software Engineers, Applications	384	514	130	34%
Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	3,553	4,713	1,160	33%
Hotel, Motel, and Resort Desk Clerks	370	490	120	32%
Physical Therapists	583	763	180	31%
Pharmacists	842	1,092	250	30%
Dental Hygienists	511	661	150	29%
Industrial Engineers	613	793	180	29%
Dental Assistants	830	1,070	240	29%
Food Preparation Workers	6,472	8,272	1,800	28%
Occupational Therapists	366	466	100	27%
Customer Service Representatives	5,917	7,527	1,610	27%
Registered Nurses	8,660	10,910	2,250	26%
Cooks, Restaurant	2,103	2,643	540	26%
Self-Enrichment Education Teachers	674	844	170	25%
Hosts and Hostesses, Restaurant, Lounge, and Coffee Shop	1,042	1,302	260	25%
Captains, Mates, and Pilots of Water Vessels	523	653	130	25%
Respiratory Therapists	403	503	100	25%
Waiters and Waitresses	7,187	8,967	1,780	25%
Industrial Machinery Mechanics	1,171	1,441	270	23%
Instructional Coordinators	438	538	100	23%
Dishwashers	1,274	1,564	290	23%

Source: Louisiana Workforce Commission

Note: The Baton Rouge Regional Labor Market Area includes the following parishes: Ascension, East Baton Rouge, East Feliciana, Iberville, Livingston, Pointe Coupee, St. Helena, Tangipahoa, Washington, West Baton Rouge, and West Feliciana.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Part 1: Socioeconomic Trends

Constraints and Opportunities

More than 40 individual stakeholders were interviewed from a variety of public and private entities, including City-Parish government, chambers of commerce, business and property owners, hospitals, non-profits, and quasi-governmental organizations. Stakeholders were asked to share their opinions about the positive aspects that contribute to the economic health of the City-Parish, as well as challenges and opportunities for economic development and redevelopment parishwide.

Constraints

Constraints and challenges are those things that make it harder for the City-Parish to achieve its economic vision and goals. While these constraints can be significant, they are not insurmountable. **Below are the obstacles for businesses identified by business owners in the Capital Region in 2017. The top obstacles identified by business owners were traffic, workforce, and education. To the right is a sample of the constraints and challenges voiced by stakeholders.**

Opportunities and Assets

Opportunities and assets are things that the Parish is doing well, or areas in which it has a comparative advantage.

CONSTRAINTS

Population and jobs shifting to suburbs and surrounding parishes; decreasing share of regional population and jobs. Economic/demographic data and stakeholder interviews suggest that people are leaving the City for other parts of the Parish, and for other parishes in the region. IRS data for 2007-2008 suggest that the adjusted gross income of households moving from East Baton Rouge Parish to Ascension and Livingston parishes was generally higher (\$55,000-\$68,000 in 2008 dollars) than income of households moving to East Baton Rouge Parish from the same parishes (\$30,000-\$36,000).

Workforce quality and availability. There is a perceived disconnect between university graduates and employers. Employers report having difficulty finding qualified job applicants, while recent university graduates report not being able to find local employment. Employers note that top talent among recent graduates leave Baton Rouge for other markets such as Houston and Atlanta to find better employment opportunities, a higher quality of life and more urban amenities. Stakeholders have also noted an insufficient amount of workforce training tailored to specific employer needs and for economically disadvantaged residents of the Parish.

Availability and lack of access to angel and venture capital. Stakeholders noted a surprising insufficiency of, and limited access to, angel and venture capital, given that Baton Rouge is a university town (i.e. research infrastructure/talent), home to a technically-oriented workforce (potential innovators), and a number of large corporations (potential sources of capital).

Lack of economic diversity. While the presence of large employers in the petrochemical industry provides stability, it also affects the overall economic diversity of the Parish, creates dependence and makes the economic health of the Parish more susceptible to changing petrochemical industry trends and government policies.

Economic and racial disparity. Economic and racial disparity in income, employment, educational attainment, and economic opportunity permeate economic development opportunities in the Parish. This includes quality of the workforce, redevelopment opportunities, condition of infrastructure, and real estate values.

Secondary education system (K-12). The quality of public schools is a challenge to economic development in that it reduces the ability for businesses to recruit and retain employees. Though the East Baton Rouge Parish School District has experienced improvements in recent years, the Louisiana Department of Education ranked its performance among the lowest in the state in 2009 and 2010. This is in contrast to school districts located in the surrounding parishes, which include four of the highest performing districts in the state: Zachary, Central, Livingston and Ascension.

Transportation infrastructure insufficiencies. Transportation infrastructure is important in moving goods and services effectively and in creating efficient commute times for employees. Major transportation impediments in East Baton Rouge Parish include:

- **Streets/highways.** Congestion on the interstate system, condition of surface streets, and lack of connectivity, particularly associated with

Part 1: Socioeconomic Trends

north/south arterials.–

- **Mass transit.** Infrequency of buses, inconvenient location of routes, lack of reliability, and lack of amenities at bus stops.–
- **Air travel.** Lack of direct flights to other markets, leakage to New Orleans airport.–

Safety. Crime, both the perception and reality of it, reduces the ability to attract and retain employees and reduces the willingness of developers to build in certain areas. In addition, some stakeholders noted that crime results in higher costs for certain businesses to stay in the City-Parish (i.e., for additional security, and addressing acts of vandalism).–

Challenging environment for redevelopment. These challenges include succession/adjudicated properties and land assembly, lack of access to gap financing for redevelopment purposes, uncertainty and inconsistency in the regulatory/development process, and diminished tax revenue that helps pay for the infrastructure and amenities needed for economic growth.–

Air and water quality. The aging wastewater infrastructure in the Parish experiences sewer system overflow problems with its wastewater collection system, prompting the Environmental Protection Agency to mandate specific maintenance and upgrades (through a consent decree) in order to protect the water quality and health of Parish residents. In addition, the City-Parish is an air quality nonattainment area, in part due to industrial processes that occur in and around the Parish. Though the Parish has seen improvements in recent years, the area ranks among the worst in the country for air quality attainment.–

OPPORTUNITIES

Employment center: The Parish is an employment center and holds about 63 percent of the region's jobs. This brings residents from all over the region into work every day and to access services. Another strong factor is the continued growth of the state capital and state agencies, which are major employment drivers. They also foster potential for employees to live in the Parish and downtown.

Stable industrial base/stable employment. East Baton Rouge Parish is not only an employment center, but also has a relatively strong industrial base and is home to a number of large industrial corporations. Some of the largest employers are government, petrochemical, medical, and higher education. Unemployment rates have historically been lower than the state and nation. The largest employers have also generally been the most stable: government, universities, petrochemical and medical industries.

Water/freight transportation infrastructure. Proximity to the port, interstate highways, and the freight railroad infrastructure are important assets.

Higher education and research facilities/educated workforce. The presence of higher education institutions – including Louisiana State

University (LSU), Southern University (SU), and Baton Rouge Community College (BRCC) – is one of the key strengths of the Parish. This benefits not just the Parish, but also the entire region (in terms of education and training, as well as research and innovation).

Commercial and medical services. Many stakeholders noted that the City-Parish provides many of the necessary commercial and medical services that residents need. There is little need to leave the Parish for most commercial and medical services.

Lifestyle. East Baton Rouge Parish and the region provide a good lifestyle. Many people note as factors: the lower cost of living relative to larger markets such as Houston and Atlanta, the small-town feel, college atmosphere, festivals and parades, parks and recreation facilities and programs, and the reputation as a sportsman's paradise.

Distance from the coast. The area is more attractive for businesses and residents because it offers more stability during the storm season and less risk of disruption and added costs.

Redevelopment and environmental remediation. In addition, the East Baton Rouge Redevelopment Authority was established in 2007 to assist in redeveloping disinvested areas within the City-Parish, including residential, commercial and industrial properties.

Environmental assessments. Since it was established in 2000, the East Baton Rouge Parish's Brownfields Program has leveraged \$1,000,000 \$800,000 in federal grants into more than \$28 million in investments to help fund redevelopment of abandoned industrial sites in the Parish.



Part 2 Developing Desired Outcomes

Economic Development Goals

East Baton Rouge Parish's economic development goals were developed with the understanding that land use, transportation, housing and the City-Parish's fiscal health are inextricably linked and essential to all residents' quality of life. Specific objectives and actions for each goal (detailed in the next section) will help provide high-quality jobs by:

- Retaining and attracting businesses that supply jobs.
- Enabling new ventures to emerge and thrive.
- Creating an improved quality-of-life for Baton Rouge's well-trained, innovative workforce.

Develop, Cultivate and Retain Talent

A well-trained workforce is an essential component of economic development. Many firms rely on a local workforce rather than bringing workers with them. Though some companies require unskilled workers, most firms today require job-related skills in addition to quality secondary and higher education. Attracting and retaining talented entrepreneurs will make the City-Parish a location of choice for the selective business component of the market.

Education plays a powerful role in providing the workforce with training necessary for a growing economy. The City-Parish should coordinate with schools to align workforce development efforts to match the skills needed by target industries. To do this, the City-Parish must communicate with representatives of the industry clusters to understand what skills are most beneficial for their workforce. Next, the City-Parish should develop a coordinated approach with educational institutions

Part 2: Developing Desired Outcomes

to ensure the curricula focuses on developing these skills.

In addition to colleges and universities, K-12 schools play multiple economic development roles. First, having a high quality K-12 system helps attract and retain high-skill firms and their employees, many of whom want the best education possible for their children. Second, not all high school graduates go on to pursue higher education. Making sure high school graduates have skills that can help launch their careers is important for East Baton Rouge Parish's economic and community health. Finally, for those unable to complete high school, the K-12 system needs to provide resources for alternative education and training.

Support Private Sector Business Development

Incentives designed to attract business or help existing businesses grow are important because they will ideally lead to business investment, new jobs, and ultimately increase demand for goods and services. Access to capital is especially important for small businesses and technology-based businesses that are considered higher risk. Traditional lenders such as banks often need to be complemented by angel and/or venture investors. In addition, public resource tools such as low interest, subordinate loans can foster greater success among these companies. This goal primarily focuses on processes such as coordination, marketing, outreach, and regulatory review – all of which create a climate supportive of business ventures.

The importance of adequate infrastructure in attracting industrial development should not be

overlooked. Industrial businesses often have specific infrastructure needs, including the ability to ship products by truck, heavy rail port or air. Additionally, many industrial firms use large amounts of water, wastewater, and electricity. To attract industrial development, whether for expanding existing companies or recruiting new ones, East Baton Rouge Parish needs to ensure that industrial land has access to the variety of infrastructure that companies and developers may require.

In general, the responsibility for providing this type of infrastructure falls to state and local governments. Sometimes there is a partnership between the private and public sectors (e.g., railroads, some utilities). The more efficiently East Baton Rouge Parish can provide or facilitate this expected infrastructure, the lower the cost will be for business development and operation.

Support Employers in Key Geographic Areas

Creating an environment that is supportive of urban development — especially within the downtown, neighborhood and regional centers — is both fundamental and critically important. A vibrant downtown and centers are important for maintaining a high quality of life for East Baton Rouge Parish residents and businesses. Talent and businesses are more attracted to cities that have energized, mixed-use downtowns, diverse, vibrant neighborhoods and vital, connected employment centers.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Part 2: Developing Desired Outcomes



Maintaining a jobs and housing balance in these areas allows residents to work closer to their homes and to take advantage of alternative transportation options. ~~Employers and residents in these districts have easy access to shopping, dining, entertainment and other services.~~ As more people work and live in **areas** downtown, neighborhood or regional centers, more services will be added and these districts will become even more desirable. Encouraging employers to locate in proximity to ~~near one another in an urban downtown environment~~ also tends to support collaboration among firms and strengthening connections between the private and public sectors.

Areas within the City-Parish that are already designated for industrial development should be marketed towards industrial firms. The City-Parish's efforts at business recruitment should focus on attracting companies that will strengthen existing industry clusters.

Enhance the Profile of Higher Education and Research Institutions

In addition to preparing the workforce, institutions of higher learning in the City-Parish also fulfill key research functions that can help stimulate innovation and attract investment. Higher education and research institutions should be recognized as economic drivers. The City-Parish and **LSU Universities** should develop a "united front" of public and private interest within the Parish to support ~~LSU's~~ efforts to secure ~~s~~State funding for higher education and to develop alternative ways of increasing ~~LSU's~~ resources.

A working group of high-level representatives from universities including Baton Rouge Community College, Southern University and Louisiana State University should be convened to explore viable areas of cooperation on research projects. Faculty and staff with research capacity and interests from New Orleans and other parts of the state should be part of the dialogue.

PART 3: Goals, Objectives and Actions to Achieve the Vision

This section details the economic development goals, objectives and actions that will move East Baton Rouge Parish toward the community's Vision.

Goals are the big overarching ideas, changes or practices that are essential to realize the community's Vision.

Objectives establish specific, measurable, attainable and realistic goals that guide how the Comprehensive Plan is implemented in a way that will achieve the Vision.

Actions outline the steps needed to achieve the objectives.

STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION PLAN:

In addition to goals, objectives and actions, the Plan recommends the strategic actions that should be taken in the first 3 to 5 years following plan adoption. These strategic actions are found in the Strategic Implementation Plan.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Part 3: Goals, Objectives and Actions

Economic Development Goals

1. Develop, cultivate and retain talent.
2. Support private sector business development.
3. Support employers in key geographic areas.
4. Connect education and training institutions with private and public sectors.

Economic Development Goal 1

Develop, cultivate and retain talent.

Objective 1.1

Promote workforce development programs that align with the target industry sectors.

Actions to support objective 1.1:

- 1.1.1 Continue to improve delivery of services from the East Baton Rouge Workforce Investment Board to develop trained workers. Consider the Louisiana Fast Start Program as a model.
- 1.1.2 Support Baton Rouge Area Chamber's Talent Development Program.
- 1.1.3 Build on capabilities of local institutions of higher education (such as BRCC's Corporate Training and Continuing Education and others) to develop career technical education that serves high school students and adults.

Objective 1.2

Enhance collaborations and partnerships to foster a culture of entrepreneurship and innovation.

Actions to support objective 1.2:

- 1.2.1 Establish mentorship programs to connect seasoned entrepreneurs with new emerging talent.
- 1.2.2 Create an entrepreneurs' forum where seasoned entrepreneurs convene quarterly to listen to, evaluate and offer recommendations on how to commercialize ideas for new ventures from new talent.
- 1.2.3 Bring seasoned entrepreneurs into business, engineering and other programs at BRCC, Southern University, and LSU to provide early exposure to students about innovation, experimenting, risk taking, and shepherding good ideas into commercialization.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Part 3: Goals, Objectives and Actions

Objective 1.3

Build partnerships and enhance coordination to better implement economic development objectives.

Actions to support objective 1.3:

- 1.3.1 Establish an Economic Development Advisory Board to review and recommend improvements in policy and implementation. Membership should include the City-Parish, BRAC, private sector and non-profit partners, school district representatives, and university/college representatives.
- 1.3.2 ~~Begin efforts to develop~~ Develop a long-range economic development strategic plan, in collaboration with BRAC, Louisiana Economic Development Department, and private/non-profit sector partners.

Objective 1.4

Attract and retain talent and businesses ~~by revitalizing the urban core.~~

Actions to support objective 1.4:

- 1.4.1 ~~Officially define, recognize and brand an area in Baton Rouge where significant medical treatment and research facilities are growing as the Medical District (MD)~~ Continue to support the Baton Rouge Health District to further enhance its role and attraction as an economic development engine. MOVE TO 1.4.2
- 1.4.2 Provide ~~additional, diverse development tools (e.g., tax credits, EB-5 foreign investment dollars, land banking, sole source impact fees, etc.)~~ to leverage private in-fill development on these sites. MOVE TO 1.4.4

- 1.4.3 Identify how and where medical and educational institutions can be integrated into mixed-use developments in ~~economically disadvantaged~~ neighborhoods that have experienced disinvestment to stimulate economic vitality while offering needed services. MOVE TO OBJ. 1.5

Objective 1.5

Improve access to economic development opportunities, job training and life skills ~~development for socially and~~ including for economically disadvantaged populations.

Actions to support objective 1.5:

- 1.5.1 Provide more mentoring programs to disadvantaged populations, particularly K-12 students, that focus on basic “soft” skills as well as technical and vocational skills.
- 1.5.2 Improve partnerships with established minority-owned business programs to enhance City-Parish policies that help small and minority-owned businesses compete for government contracts.
- 1.5.3 ~~Evaluate the range of incentives (e.g., low-cost child care associated with continuing education) that are effective at capturing and retaining economically disadvantaged populations and aggressively apply those that are most beneficial.~~ Increase participation in City-Parish contracts by minorities and evaluate the benefits of creating a Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE) and/or Minority AND Women Business Enterprises (MBE) program.
- 1.5.4 Develop a workforce employment program that places emphasis on the training and job

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Part 3: Goals, Objectives and Actions

placement of ex-offenders.

for public dollars spent on economic development.

Economic Development Goal 2

Support private sector business development.

Objective 2.1

Identify businesses in growing industry sectors (and their suppliers).

Actions to support objective 2.1:

- 2.1.1 Continue to identify and refine the list of target industry sectors that will further diversify the City-Parish's economic base into growth-oriented sectors.⁵ Focus on assistance programs to enhance the growth of the following target sectors: advanced manufacturing, corporate facilities and headquarters operations, digital media, emerging energy and bio-fuels, entertainment and film production, specialty chemicals, and specialty medical/biomedical.
- 2.1.2 Partner with the BRAC and other local economic development allies (such as airport, LSU, Southern, BRCC, etc.) to develop and implement an international business development program that targets investment from foreign-owned companies.
- 2.1.3 ~~Develop evaluation tools to assess the impacts of the international business development program and modify them over time as needed. Adopt annual metrics and establish accountability mechanisms~~

~~⁵ In 2011, BRAC will update its Target Industry Study, which will identify viable target industries that can be relocated to Baton Rouge Area. This includes information on competitiveness in terms of tax, workforce and labor availability/cost, and necessary incentives to secure types of industry. The BRAC study will also identify potential International Foreign Direct Investment target industries and companies.~~

Objective 2.2

Attract and develop research and development across public and private sectors.

Action to support objective 2.2:

- 2.2.1 Consider public investment in a center for research and development, in partnership with area universities, hospitals, and businesses that can be leveraged to promote investment and stimulate more collaboration among regional players.

Objective 2.3

Support retention and growth of existing companies.

Actions to support objective 2.3:

- 2.3.1 Provide programs that help local and existing businesses increase market share, ~~including export assistance programs, contracting opportunities, manufacturing extension partnership assistance, business mentoring resources, and other education programs.~~
- 2.3.2 Support existing small business resources such as SCORE and maintain a small business resource guide with easy-to-follow information on business resources in the region, as well as information on federal, state and local business loan and tax incentive programs.
- 2.3.3 Intensify partnering between BRAC, ~~Baton Rouge Community College, Southern University, LSU~~ **universities** and the City-Parish on BRAC's business retention and expansion visitation program for existing firms.

Part 3: Goals, Objectives and Actions

2.3.4 Support and market **business incubators** ~~existing economic gardening programs~~ that help grow local start-ups.⁶

2.3.5 Support new and expanded cooperative business ventures, which can reduce risk while improving market impact of small businesses.

~~2.3.6 Align and enhance business incubation programs.~~

2.3.7 Promote and facilitate procurement of Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) applications for federal grants to support emerging innovative companies.

Objective 2.4

Create a **customer friendly** ~~positive~~, efficient permitting and regulatory process.

Actions to support objective 2.4:

2.4.1 Expand current offering of enhanced ~~electronic~~ access to City-Parish **business development** activities ~~such as business registrations, construction permitting, tax remittance, and account management.~~

2.4.2 **Continue to evaluate opportunities to streamline the development and review process** ~~services of the Permit and Inspection Division to keep track of building trends within the City-Parish.~~

2.4.3 Utilize consolidated facilities to establish a “one-stop” permit center and a guaranteed review process for qualified economic development projects to enhance efficiency and predictability of the plan review and

building permit process. **Objective 2.5**

Explore innovative funding from a variety of sources.

Action to support objective 2.5:

2.5.1 Formalize a network to deliver angel and venture capital to complement and expand upon existing informal capital availability so that more emerging businesses have access to needed resources.

Objective 2.6

Use incentives to reduce development costs for businesses.

Actions to support objective 2.6:

2.6.1 Evaluate and adjust the performance and effectiveness of existing incentives, including but not limited to, Enterprise Zones, Economic Development Districts, and Foreign Trade Zones and recommend changes to improve their effectiveness.

2.6.2 Promote existing incentives (e.g., tax credits, low interest loans, land banking/land write-downs) and cultivate promising new programs.

2.6.3 Establish a deal-closing fund (funded jointly by private and public sources) to create incentives for business expansion or relocation in the City-Parish where the return on investment (both private and public) can be demonstrated.

2.6.4 Consider public-private partnerships to fund key infrastructure improvements that will enhance the readiness of potential commerce/business parks.

~~6 Economic Gardening is an approach to economic development established first by Littleton, Colorado. The focus is on creating a nurturing environment for growing local entrepreneurs rather than recruiting businesses from elsewhere.~~

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Part 3: Goals, Objectives and Actions

Objective 2.7

Recognize environmental planning and design as supportive of economic development.

Actions to support objective 2.7:

- ~~2.7.1 Ensure consistency with the established parameters of the Consent Decree.~~
- 2.7.2 ~~Seek to~~ Exceed minimum environmental requirements and market City-Parish as a green and energy efficient metropolitan area.

Economic Development Goal 3

Support employers in key geographic areas.

Objective 3.1

Enhance public-private partnerships that can focus on revitalizing downtown and other key areas.

Actions to support objective 3.1:

- 3.1.1 Support the efforts of economic development entities, such as the Downtown Development District, Mid City Redevelopment Alliance, Baton Rouge Redevelopment Authority and Baton Rouge North Economic Development District.
- 3.1.2~~1~~ Partner with private and non-profit developers to provide significantly more housing opportunities (ownership and rental) for all incomes, including support for and development of mixed income housing development projects.
- 3.1.2 Consider the creation of a downtown-riverfront urban renewal district to help fund key public improvements and leverage stronger private investment in the area.
MOVE TO 3.2.2

- 3.1.3 Support businesses so they can become catalysts for further community improvement rather than functioning as stand-alone projects. MOVED FROM LAND USE

Objective 3.2

Promote river-oriented development in the downtown area.

Action to support objective 3.2:

- 3.2.1 Craft a phased redevelopment strategy among riverfront property owners so that both investors/developers and the larger community benefit from the unique, positive role of the Mississippi River.

Objective 3.3

~~Enhance~~ Support investment redevelopment in neighborhoods ~~close to downtown to attract new talent and businesses.~~

Actions to support objective 3.3:

- 3.3.1 Continue to assemble and clear the title of under-utilized and adjudicated properties and blocks for redevelopment.
- 3.3.2 Establish one or more urban renewal districts in neighborhoods located close to downtown to provide Develop a long-term tool kit that more comprehensively addresses economic development opportunities and challenges.
- 3.3.3 ~~Provide additional, diverse development tools (e.g., tax credits, foreign investment dollars, land banking, sole source impact fees, etc.) to leverage private in-fill development on these sites. DELETE (DUPLICATE)~~
- 3.3.4 ~~Issue RFOs on~~ Identify publicly owned sites that could be to attractive qualified to

Part 3: Goals, Objectives and Actions

private developers.

- 3.3.5 Prioritize the revitalization of underserved areas of Baton Rouge, such as North Baton Rouge, Gardere and Old South Baton Rouge.

Objective 3.4

Ensure the City-Parish has an adequate supply of sites suitable for development or expansion of employment uses.

Actions to support objective 3.4:

- 3.4.1 Partner with BRAC to conduct a Parishwide survey to identify sites suitable for commercial and industrial development inventory of employment lands, needs assessment, and action plan.
- 3.4.2 Identify potential sites for the development of employment centers in the southern portion of the Parish bounded by I-10, I-12, Airline Highway and Seigen Lane. **DELETE**
- 3.4.3 Leverage previous success and expand **Continue to implement** the City-Parish's **bBrownfields pProgram** to facilitate private-sector investment in redevelopment of brownfield sites.

Objective 3.5

Leverage existing medical and research centers to catalyze more mixed-use development.

Actions to support objective 3.5:

- 3.5.1 Officially define, recognize and brand an area in Baton Rouge where significant medical treatment and research facilities are growing, further enhancing the area's role as an economic development engine. **DELETE (COMPLETE)**

- 3.5.2 Develop formal links among the key institutions and organizations within the medical district, creating better coordination, communication and transportation within the area.

- 3.5.3 Market the ~~medical~~ **Health d** District within ~~and beyond the region~~ to help attract research opportunities, talent, and new firms.

- ~~3.5.4 Identify how and where medical and educational institutions can be integrated into mixed-use developments in economically disadvantage neighborhoods to stimulate economic vitality while offering needed services. DELETE (DUPLICATE)~~

Objective 3.6

Capitalize on **land suitable for** industrial development ~~land~~ around the airport and **access to** major interstate corridors.

Actions to support this objective include:

- 3.6.1 Support partnership efforts by **simplifying regulatory process for development near** ~~between~~ the airport, the City-Parish and BRAC to develop and promote an **n multi-tenant** industrial park near the airport.
- 3.6.2 ~~Ensure that infrastructure for the airport area uses sustainable practices and the most effective communications network to help attract and retain industries. DELETE~~

Objective 3.7

Support partnerships between the City-Parish and the Port of Greater Baton Rouge.

Actions to support this objective include:

- 3.7.1 Explore opportunities for the Port to more

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Part 3: Goals, Objectives and Actions

aggressively participate in financing (e.g., through tax-exempt bonds) Port-related business development.

- 3.7.2 Consider expansion of the Port's Foreign Trade Zone Boundaries to provide enhanced coverage of the larger region

Economic Development Goal 4

Connect education and training institutions with private and public sectors.

Objective 4.1

Support development of the state's flagship university into a top national research university.

MAKE OBJ. 4.2

Actions to support objective 4.1:

- 4.1.1 Enhance partnerships between LSU, private businesses and public agencies in the City-Parish to increase the quality and appeal the parish of LSU **course** offerings. These could include joint ventures with private industry to construct state-of-the-art facilities on and off campus, and key partnerships to build "centers of excellence" in program areas where LSU has a comparative advantage. **MOVE WITH OBJ. TO 4.2. (WILL BE 4.2.1)**
- 4.1.2 Collaborate with ~~LSU~~ **universities** in preparing a "university economic development strategy" that identifies economic development objectives and roles ~~of the City-Parish and LSU, and~~ **that** aligns with economic development objectives of the City-Parish. **KEEP UNDER OBJ. 4.1 (WILL BE 4.1.1)**

Objective 4.2

Encourage collaborative research and innovation within and among colleges and universities.

MAKE OBJ. 4.1

Actions to support objective 4.2:

- 4.2.1 Convene a working group of high-level representatives from Baton Rouge Community College, Southern University, LSU and other parts of the state to explore viable areas of cooperation on research projects. **MOVE WITH OBJ. TO 4.1. (WILL BE 4.1.2)**
- 4.2.2 Work with the Louisiana Board of Regents to develop a standardized technology transfer program to improve the transfer of university innovation into the regional economy. **MOVE WITH OBJ. TO 4.1. (WILL BE 4.1.3)**

Objective 4.3

Support development of the Pennington Biomedical Research Center and its world-class research.

Actions to support objective 4.3:

- 4.3.1 Enhance cross-training opportunities for faculty and students at LSU and Pennington.
- 4.3.2 Work with BRAC and anchor institutions, such as LSU, Pennington and area hospitals, to develop an economic development strategy focused on biomedical research and innovation.

Objective 4.4

Support ~~immediate~~ investments in K-12 and higher education.

Actions to support objective 4.4:

- 4.4.1 Formalize a partnership between the East

Baton Rouge Public School System, BRAC, universities, and the local business community to provide continued financial support and direction for the East Baton Rouge Parish School System (EBRPSS) Career Education Center, established in 2010.

- 4.4.2 ~~Provide continued financial support through partnerships with the City Parish, District Attorney, and the Sheriff for the recently established EBRPSS Truancy Center, which will focus on a comprehensive range of services for at-risk kids and their families, including counseling, tutoring, food stamps, medical and other social services.~~ **MOVE TO GOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION**
- 4.4.3 Provide more mentoring programs to disadvantaged populations, particularly K-12 students, that focus on basic “soft” skills as well as technical and vocational skills.
- 4.4.4 Initiate a collaborative process to align the East Baton Rouge Public School Systems strategic plan with FUTUREBR’s land use plan and economic development objectives.